

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27th September 2016

Motion from Councillor Anne Devitt: lands at mountgorry. AI029056

That the lands on the attached map be designated for sports complex as per the attached motion and map.

REPORT:

This motion seeks to include a specific local objective on a large area of land (approximately 13 ha) at Mountgorry, Swords, 9 ha zoned Objective 'HA' (High Amenity) and 4 ha zoned 'GB' (Greenbelt). This local objective would state:

Provide for a high quality and integrated sports complex with ancillary directly related uses where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment, landscape or local amenities.

The subject lands are mainly zoned HA. The high amenity areas and particularly the Coastal Corridor contain the County's most important EU, National and local resources in terms of natural environment, landscape and heritage. The sensitive development and conservation of these environment resources is critical to their long term sustainability. Notably, the areas of greatest development pressure within the County coincide closely with these areas of high amenity value. In this regard, a careful balance has to be achieved between new development and the on-going need to protect its high landscape value.

The Draft Plan affords a high level of landscape value and protection to these high amenity areas. These landscape areas meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Contain scenic landscape of high quality
- Afford expansive or interesting views of surrounding areas
- Are components in important views and prospects
- Are unique or special within the County
- Are important elements in defining the coastal character of the County
- Act as a backdrop to important coastal views
- Contain important groups of trees or woodland

- Are elevated or ridge sites on which development would be obtrusive
- Provide public access to interesting attractive landscapes or to semi-natural
- Areas

The subject lands come within these criteria due to their location adjacent to Broadmeadow Estuary. They are identified as part of an ecological buffer zone due to their adjacency to the Malahide/Broadmeadow estuary which is a Special Area Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Natural Heritage Area, the first two designations being that of European status and triggering the Habitats Directive Assessment process for any development proposed. Objective NH17 refers in this regard, which states:

'Protect the functions of the ecological buffer zones and ensure proposals for development have no significant adverse impact on the habitats and species of interest located therein.' Additionally, Objective NH17 provides for the following:

'Develop Ecological Masterplans for the Rogerstown, Malahide and Baldoyle Estuaries focusing on their ecological protection and that of their surrounding buffer zones.'

The Greenbelt surrounding Swords is one of the most critical in the County having regard to the close proximity of other settlements. Any encroachment into this strategic Greenbelt area would result in coalescence and the loss of definition between urban and rural areas

Notwithstanding the zoning objectives, this motion seeks a local objective relating to an integrated sports complex on these lands. A Recreational Facility/Sports facility use is a permitted in principle on GB zoned lands and the Recreational Facility/Sports facility use is open for consideration on HA zoned lands. Therefore, there is no need for a local objective seeking what is both open for consideration and permitted in principle under the two zonings attaching to the lands.

Furthermore, any future development on these lands would be subject to any planning restraints, constraints, designation of the area and assessment of similar uses against any targeted locations identified by the Council or such uses.

In addition, the Swords area has two new Active recreational hubs identified as GIM1 on sheet 14 of the Draft Development Plan, named Mooretown/Oldtown [Swords] and Drinan located on OS/GB lands. It is considered reasonable therefore that the suitability of these identified sites has been given full consideration by the Council as appropriate locations for such uses with respect to accessibility, traffic issues, car parking and service provision. It is also noted there is a Local Area Plan proposed for Lissenhall, which will include significant

community infrastructure including sports facilities as part of any future sustainable mixed use urban district.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that no change is made.